

LET'S

Your Weekly Dining and Entertainment Guide

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Art for women's sake

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Art of women's artistry

On the cover

By JULIE MORRIS

Staff Writer

SAN JUAN BAUTISTA — A new show this week at Galeria Tonantzin in San Juan Bautista gives southern Santa Clara and San Benito county residents a rare opportunity to see a collection of women's contemporary art for free.

"One of the things we want to target is making art accessible to the masses," said gallery co-owner Valerie Eglan.

"So often art caters to the elite of society. Since the 1940s art has become more and more of an expensive, removed item."

Galeria Tonantzin, located in the heart of the Mission City on the corner of Third and Washington streets in the Old Plaza Market, is an all-women owned and operated art gallery filled with original works. The tiny studio is tucked in between other shops in the mall but is rich with ideas and energy.

The newest show, titled "All Member Exhibition," opens Friday, March 5 at 1 p.m. and will run through the month of March. A reception for the artists is scheduled on Saturday, March 6 from 5-7 p.m.

Works included in the show are those of Eglan and co-owners Jennifer Colby, Carmen Leon and Rose Buffalo.

"We're recruiting other women interested in showing their work," Leon said. "I don't know what the response will be, but we are offering an invitation to anyone interested in joining us."

The four women share the gallery and have shown other womens' art in recent months. Their goal in opening the gallery last year was to offer a place where womens' art could be shown and traded.

"We are in the process of learning too," Leon said. "It is different for women to show, it's rare that we are the founders and initiators of galleries."

Leon plans to show her paintings



BRAD SHIRAKAWA/Staff Photographer

Valerie Eglan with one of her ceramic sculptures "Tienanmen Square."

"We're recruiting other women interested in showing their work...we are offering an invitation to anyone interested..."

— Carmen Leon, artist

at the March show. Using acrylic with a touch of water, she blends bright colors on canvas to create vivid images of animals and plants.

The sculptures of Eglan will also be shown, including a piece titled "Battle Wagon," inspired by the daily struggles of domestic life and its parallels to war.

"It is made of found materials," Eglan explained. "They are things one would find on a ranch or a farm

to show people that these are not things reserved only for the battlefield."

The sculpture is made of wood and rests on two wheels used as steering devices for water pipes. A longer piece of wood rests atop the main piece.

"It's very phallic," Eglan said.

Leon's paintings use a completely different medium as do Buffalo's corn dolls and Colby's objects — also made of found materials.